

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 24, 27-33, 35, and 37-39 without disclaimer or prejudice to the filing of one or more continuation or divisional applications based on the subject matter of these claims.

Please amend claims 1, 21, and 34 to read as follows:

1. (twice amended) A method for providing utility consumption data to a utility

C1 consumer, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving metering data from a utility meter located at a remote facility operated by said utility customer, wherein said metering data is electronically transmitted in substantially real time from said utility meter to a data processing system;

calculating billing data using said metering data at said data processing system;

storing said metering data and said billing data electronically at said data processing system; and

reporting said metering data and said billing data electronically from said data processing system to said utility customer.

- C2 21. (twice amended) A method for reducing utility costs at a remote facility associated with an utility consumer, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving consumption information at a data processing system in substantially real time from a meter located at said remote facility;

receiving price factors at said data processing system;

calculating utility cost at said data processing system as a function of said consumption information and of said price factors; and

providing said utility cost from said data processing system to said utility consumer such that said utility consumer is allowed to thereby manage said utility cost for said remote facility.

C2  
cont

34. (twice amended) A system for providing energy consumption data for a facility affiliated with an energy consumer, the system comprising:

a receiving means configured to receive metering data in substantially real time from a meter located at said facility via a digital network;

a processing means in communication with said receiving means, wherein said processing means is configured to determine pricing options as a function of said metering information and of pricing factors affiliated with an energy source;

a transmitting means configured to transmit said pricing options to said energy consumer via said digital network such that said energy consumer is allowed to evaluate said pricing options to thereby manage energy consumption at said facility.

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